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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/24/06

SPONSOR Gardner LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HB 146

SHORT TITLE Grants to Rural Communities SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Earnest

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$1,000.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to:  
HB 110, SB 98, SB99,

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Economic Development Department (EDD)  
NM Department of Agriculture (NMDA)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 146, "An Act Making an Appropriation to the Economic Development Department for the New Mexico Rural Development Response Council to Match Federal Funding and Foundation Grants and to Make Grants to Rural Communities," appropriates \$1 million (\$1,000,000) from the general fund to the Economic Development Department for the New Mexico Rural Development Response Council to make grants to rural communities and match federal funding and foundation grants.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$1 million (\$1,000,000) contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of shall not revert to the general fund.

**SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The appropriation would support the New Mexico Rural Development Response Council’s rural readiness program.

Since their inception, rural response councils across the nation have been funded by the federal government. EDD indicates that federal funding for Rural Development Response Councils has declined in recent years due to federal cut backs. All federal funding will end this year.

According to the NM Department of Agriculture, the Rural Readiness program has been a highly successful activity of the New Mexico Rural Development Response Council. This program is viewed as a national example for rural development efforts and works with communities in New Mexico with a population fewer than 15,000 residents to provide technical assistance to implement economic development projects. It is a self-help economic development program for these communities, which often lack the personnel or expertise to implement economic development activities. NMDA has been a member of the New Mexico Rural Development Response Council for many years.

**PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

EDD would not have oversight or responsibility for the performance of the funded programs.

**CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

- HB 110 would appropriate \$500 thousand to the Department of Finance and Administration for the same purpose.
- SB 98 would appropriate \$500 thousand to the Department of Finance and Administration for the same purpose.
- SB 99 would appropriate \$500 thousand to the Economic Development Department for the same purpose.

**WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

EDD indicates that there are no other statewide programs capable of filling this gap if the Rural Development Response Council does not have funding.

According to NMDA, there will be fewer opportunities for New Mexico rural communities to enact viable economic development projects. Studies indicate that New Mexico communities with populations under 5,000 residents continue to lose population at an alarming rate. This decline in population and in maintaining a viable rural New Mexico would likely accelerate.

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